

London: Printed at the
Press of August 16 1861.



LONDON
Sold for William Fife and
sold at his Shop in the Poper-hall
and all the Thoroughfares.





A

True Relation of the cruell Murthering of a young Boy, not fully three yeares olde, w^t olde Sister likewise had her tongue cut out of her head, hard by the rootes: which murther and massacre v. done b^y, a woman called Mother Dell, and her Sonne, dwelling at *Husfeld* in Hartfordshire, for which monstrous fact, they were both hanged at Hartford this last Syses. The onely witnessesse to prove the Murther was the tongue-
les Childe, most mightily preserued from death,
to which Childe it pleased God to lend
the vse of speech, notwithstanding
the want of her tongue.

In Hatfield in the Countie of Hartford, dwelled an olde Widdow^e, called Mother Dell, who had abiding with her in the house, onely her Sonne, named T. Dell: Into the house of this old woman (some feure yeares since) was scene goe into two prettie Children a Boy and a Gire, the Boy seemed not thre yeares of age, and the Gire not much aboue seuer. These Children were led into the said house by a wadling Pedler & his wife (or Puncke.) The going in of these children was noted by divers, but especiallye by a Taylor dwelling in the towne called A. C. which Taylor marke them so much the more, for that they were handsomely apparelled, and their coates made with new winges, skirtes and lags, such as he had not scene the like of before, which

made him presently vpon the sight of them, to make a pasterne of those wings and Jagges: But doubting that he had not taken a true partie, he watched to haue another sight of those Children. But when for two or thre daies space he could not see them, hee went to the house of Mother Dell, and did aske her for those Children? shee answered him verie shortly saying: they were safe enough; for they were gone againe with them that brought them.

With this answeare the Taylor was satished, because it no further consernd him then the getting of a peece of a new fashon. But within a while after the boy was found dead in a ditch or water not farre from the Towne, with a great peece of wood tyed to his backe. The Childe being taken out, it did plainly appere that hee was murthered before he was throwne in. The poore harmelesse Infant being found thus cruelly murthered, and none that looked on him taking knowledge of him. His pretty little coate was taken and hanged vp in divers market townes and proclamation made in euerie one of those Townes to this effect, that if any one whatsoever cou'd and would tel where the Father or Mother of the murthered Childe (whic) wore that Coate dwelt, he should haue forty shillings for his paines, and his charges borne to bring him from and to the place where hee dwelt: But all this proved to little or no purpose, till at the last, this newes came to the hearing of the Taylor, who comming to the place where the Coate was to bee seene, and taking geod notice esit, he presently calde to his remembrance, that that coate was worne by one of those Children which hee had seene goe into the house of Mother Dell.

The newes of this comming to the eares of Sir Henry Butler and one other Knight, being both Justices, and both dwelinge neere to that place, a warrant was made, by vertue whereof, the said Mother Dell and her Sonne were brought before them both, and strialye examined, where they both confess y two such Children as the Tay-

lor spake o^c, came into the house with a Pedler and his wife, and that they verily thought the Boy at that time had that coate on his backe : but all this was nothing to them, for they neither knew the Pedlar nor his wife, onely they came thereto see if they had neede of any of their ware, (as it is a common vse for traueling Pedlars to call at divers houses) & when they had bestowed some little money with them, both hee his wife, and those Children (which they saide were theirs) went out on the back-side of the house, and what after became of them, they knew not.

Upon this their confession, they were both bound over to appeare and answere at the next Assizes, the Justices hoping ere that time to finde out the actor or actors of that more then monstrous tragedy. But alas their hopes were deceaved, for the time was not yet come wherein God had decreed to bring this cruell, barbarous, and bloody massacre to light: yet notwithstanding, they were still bound ouer from Hise to Hise, almoste for foure yeares, in which time, the saide Mother Dell bestowed greate cost in altering, repaying, and furnishing of her house, which made many of her neigbours much to woder, for that they knew not from whence shée shoulde haue wherewith to defray that charge.

But now let vs leane both her and her Sonne to the bē and horrour of a guiltie conscience, which alwaies waytes and attends on murtherers, and let vs now speake of the poore mangled and dismembred Gitle, who was now in farre worse case then her dead Mother, had not hee which prouides for the whole world, in his good appointed tyme prouided for her: For her tongue was first cut out of her head by the rootes, then was shée led by this said Mother of mischiefe and her Sonne, (at a time when they were not seene) to the side of a wood, which was sildome frequented, in which place stood an old great hollow tree, which was not very high.

Hunting

Having brought this helpleſſe and hopeleſſe child to this tree (which they meant ſhould be her graue) the ſonne got vp to the top, and radeily halled vp after him this harmleſſe girlie, who having ſeen her brother muſthered before her face, had no reaſon to hope of life, yet did ſhe not ceaſe with teares and ſignes to begge for pitie of theſe pittileſſe wretches, whose hearts being much harder then ſtone, would not relent: ſo this mercileſſe villaine let her ſlippe into the tree, where they leſt her, in hope never more to ſee her, or heare of her.

But he that preſerved Daniel in the Lions den, and made the blinde to ſee, the lame to goe, and the dumbe to ſpeakē, diſdid not onely preſerue the life of this childe, but alſo diſgivē vnto her an extraordinarie ſtrength and vigour, whereby ſhe was able, and diſmake ſuch a noyſe, that a man comming by that way (not by chaunce, but ſurlye by the prouidence and appointment o: God) hearing a ſtrange humming, and hollow crying, drawing neare to that tree, perceiued the noyſe and crie to come from thence, which made him get vp to the top of it, where being and looking downe into it, he behelde that pittifull, ruthfull, and b̄odyp ſpectacle: which when he had a whiile looked on with pitte and compassion, and hauing ſpoke to her, and percyuyng by her ſignes that ſhe could not anſwer him, he made meaneſs to drawe her out. Which when he had done, he began (as may be eaſily imagined) to bethinke with himſelfe, what great trouble hee might come into if hee were found with the childe, he being a ſtranger, as it ſeems he was.

And this feare of trouble (as was ſuppoſed by the graue and wiſe Judge and Justices of the Bench, when the maſter came to their hearing) made this man after he had pulleſ her out of the tree, to make from her with all the haſte he could. But the poore ſoule pursued him with all the haſte ſhe could, crying and calling vnto him for ſuccor and helpe in the beſt manner ſhe could, being therewnto urged

by

by paine and hunger, the least of which will force a man
of a resolute and resolued spirit to breake silence, had bee-
bowled the contrarie: much more then being ioyned both
together must they force a childe.

In brefe then, when she had lost the sight of him, God
knowes what became of her; but no one man or woman
can tell any certaine place of her abode so almost these
four yeares.

Many say they haue seen such a dumbe childe wander
up and downe a begging, And she hertselfe hath confessid
(since the tyme that God hath sent her vse of her speech and
utterance, that she may bee easly understood by any that
shaile heare her) that she did beg for her foode all that tyme.

And questionlesse, the Lord who had reserved her, both
to bring so monstros a murder, and cruell a massacre to
light, and also to make manifest his almighty power to
many misbelieving and vnbelieving miscreants (Atheists
I meane) he, I say, as may most evidently appeare, did
both preserue her, and prouide for her.

And now the tyme drawing neare, wherein it pleased
God to glue these wicked wretches some part of their
reward, he so directed the course of this poore wandring
childe, that she came backe againe to the towne of Hat-
field, where she received her iwynngs, hauing yet no vse
of speech nor utterance, whereby she might be understood.
And wandring up and downe the towne, little thinking
she had beeene neare the place where her innocent brother
lost his life, and hertselfe the instrument of her speech: but
going along the streeete, gasing here and there, as children
will doe (yea and olde folkes too) when they come into a
strange p'ace, At last shee came by the house where this
bloodie tragidie had beeene acted: whiche house she no sooner
saw, but she knew, as did appeare by the signes of griefe
and sorrow, whiche she made at the sight thereof. For what
with her crying, and the extraordinarie noyse which shes
made, shewre people about her, who did in some sorte

seeme to greeue at the moane shee made: but surely they could not chuse but wonder, and desire to knowe what the sorroin and signes ment which the childe made. For one while she would gape wide with her mouth, drawing her soore finger to and fro it, as though she had beene cutt, ting of some thing: then would she with her finger poynt into the house. And when this mother Dell and her sonne came to the doore, then her crying and her signes did steme much to encrease, whiche made the lookers on to suspect much, but alas they knew not what. But at last amongst other folkes came the Tailer before spoken of, and hee no sooner saw the childe, noted her signes, and remembred the other Childe found in the water and murthered as is aforesaide, but straight he saies, that this was the other of thos. Children, which was ledde into that house long since by the Pedler and his wife. Then some of the Neighbours together with the Tayloz, tooke the childe and led her into the house, shee being within, stood staring wildeye round about her, at last shee spied a paire of stayres, to which shee went directely, and comming to them, shee looked earnestly on them, looking about the house againe, she first pointed to the stayres, and then to a corner of the house, as who shold say, these stayres did stand there.

This signe the neigbors understood well, because they knew the stayres had bene remoued and that made them thinke some soule matter woulde bee pickt out of her other signes. Whereupon they beganne to lay handes on the Mother and her Sonne, to haue them againe (now with the Childe) before the Justice, at which the childe seemed to rejoyce.

Being brought before Sir Henry Butler, who was the next Justice, (and had examined them divers times before concerning these Children) the Constable of Headboroughe beganne to tell unto his Worshipp the cause of their comming, and having related unto him from point

to point, what they had seene, the Childe marking, and understanding them well, tell to her former signes againe before the Knight. Whereupon hee did with greate wisdome and discretion, examine them aparte, one from another. But ihey both remained still obstinate, and in their olde tale, confessing nothing, nor would anye of them acknowledge, that they had ever scene the Childe before, notwithstanding the Tayloz did still assyze it to their faces, that that was the Childe which the Pedler and his wife led into their house long since with the boy.

The Justice assuring himselfe now, that these were the acto:rs of that bloody Tragedy, & hoping that God would in time make it yet more plaine then it was, hee caused a Mittimus to be made & sent them to the Jayle, there to remayne with out kyple or maineprise vntill the Assises. And further hee willed the Constable to take the Childe backe againe with him to the Towne, and to haue a great care that she might be wel looked vnto, and to see the house of Mother Dell safely shut vp.

All this being doone according to the Knights com-ma:nd, & the childes lodging & diet being much better, then it had bee:ne long before, she began to gather both strength and spirit vnto her, and to take delight to playe amongst Children.

But now (Gentle Reader) let mee intreate thee as thou readst, not onelye to admize and wonder, but to prayse & magnifie the myghtie maker and preseruer of vs all, for his great mercy and myght shewed to this poore childe, in this next succeeding action, which if wee looke into but with the eyes of naturall reason and humane sence, it will be thought incrediblē and impossible. But with God nothing is impossiblē, & this ought not to be thought incrediblē, because it was so lately and sonere vnto vs done, and for that the Childe is yet living in Hatfield to affirme for truth, all that is here written of her.

Now you shal understand, that this gitle being playing
 with other children on the backe-side of some mans house
 in the towne, where cocks, hens, & chickens were feeding,
 It pleased God at that time, to make a cocke to be (as it
 were a tutoz to the child, and) his first messenger of this
 myghtie miracle, like as a bird of the same name and na-
 ture, vsing the selfe same note, put Peter in minde that hee
 had denide his maister: from which his remembraunce,
 sprung his trae and heartie repentance. But to proceedes:
 This child being playing(as I said before)one of the rocks
 in the yard began to crow, and another answered him and
 thus they continuued a prettie while. At last one of the chil-
 dren began(after their maner) to mocke the cockes, cry-
 ing cocke-adoodle-doo: in the end this dumbe child, stray-
 ning her selfe, cried as the rest had done, cocke-adoodle-doo,
 which made all the children amazde:and one of them that
 stood next her, said: what, canst thou speake now? I that
 I can (said she) speaking it so plainly that they all under-
 stood her. The hearing of this mad the children breake
 vp their play, and runne home with ioy to the house where
 this childe was kept, to carrie newes. And when she came
 home to the house where she was kept, and the folke of the
 house finding the report of the children to be true, with ex-
 ceeding ioy (after the asking of her some few questions, to
 which she did answeire verie directly) they led her againe
 to the knyght before named, to whom they tolde what had
 happened. Which when he had heard (he being furnished
 with the feare of God, which is indeede the true fountaine
 and foun dat ion of wisdome) hee first of all gaue thankes
 to God, and then he did ask her who cutt out her tongue?
 She said, the olde woman and her sonne, that killed her bro-
 ther, and put her into the tree: then he asked her who tooke
 her out of the tree? and she saide, a man, that when hee had
 done did runne away from her because he could not speake
 to him. The kyngesse asked whither shewent then? but alas
 she could not tell him: then he did ask her, who brought

her

her to the old woman's house first: and she said a man and a woman that had killed her father and her mother, and taken a great bagge of money from them. And she said that the man and woman had giuen a great deale of that money to the olde woman: and that the olde woman did at that time lift vp her hands thre times, and did sweare thre times, that she would never tell any body who they were. These and many other questions the Knight did aske her, to all which she did answer, with moze reason and sense, then is common to one of her age.

To conclude, the Wifes being come, an Indictement was prefered against the mother and the sonne, to which indictment they pleaded not guilty, and put themselves to the ordinary triall. Whereupon the childe was brought before the Bench, and stode vpon the Table betweene the Bench and the Jury. Where after that the foresaid knight had opened some part of this soule offence, the childe was asked diuerse of the former questions: to which she answered as before. The taylour likewise was there, who tolde vnto the Jurie what he had seene. Then the Jurie was willed to goe togither: but before they went, they did looks into the childes mouth, but could not see so much as the stumpe of a tongue therein. The Jurie said not long before they returned with their verdite guilty, wherevpon they had sentence of death pronounced against them, and were both hanged at Hartfort the fourth day of August.

1606.

Thus farre (gentle reader) haue I set down bylesly and truly the maner of this monstrous massacre. And how farre it bath pleased God to reveale some of the Autho'res: and for some secrete purpose best knowne to himselfe, to conceale the rest, which questionlesse shall be made knowne in his good appointed time, when it shall bee most for his honouer and glorie. In the meane time, let me intreat all you which doe reade or heare this curiall discourse, to meditate (as I doe and will) on the many miseries and mischances mankinde

kind is subiect to, which if you doe, questionlesse you will make lesse joy at the birth of your childdren, and lese sorrow at their death then commonly you doe, and rather lecke (in some sort) to imitate those Heathens, which did sing and daunce at the death of their children, then those Christians which doe mourne and sorrow as men past hope. As soz the loue which ordinarily men beare unto their children, it may more fitly bee called loue to themselves, then to their children. For notwithstanding we all know or ought to know, that no one is truly happy till his end, if he die well, yet many (nay most of vs) doe rather desire to haue our children suruie vs, then to see them fairely bestowed before vs. Neuer thinking, respecting, or regarding, what may come to them after our death: so our humors be fed in our liues. And if this may not truly be said to be selfe-loue, I know not what is selfe-loue. Thereforo let vs all and every one of vs, referre and put our willes to Gods will, assuring our selues, that all things shall worke togither for the best, for them that loue and feare him.

As soz the Pedler and his wife, which the child hath confess to haue robbed and kilde her father and mother, they are not yet found out, nor is the place and abode of her too unfortunate Parents yet knowne. But yet all in good time, if it be the will of the Amightie, both the one and the other shall come to light. Amen.

5 AP 58



